

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 - 15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [15] 17, the limiting comprising the perimeter surface of the washer rolling on the portion of the liner between the channels upon contact with the portion of the liner between the channels when the cutting tool is moved in the channel cutting direction.

17. ~~The method of claim 15;~~ A method of cutting channels in a liner of a rocket engine combustion chamber or a rocket engine nozzle, the method comprising:

cutting the liner along a channel direction at a cutting depth with a cutting tool, the cutting tool comprising a pair of rotating cutting blades, and the cutting tool comprising at least one washer disposed between the cutting blades and being concentric with the cutting blades, the washer adapted to be freely rotatable relative to the cutting blades, a radius of the washer being smaller than a radius of the cutting blades; and

limiting the cutting depth by a perimeter surface of the washer contacting a portion of the liner between the channels cut by the pair of cutting blades further comprising sensing a force of the contact between the perimeter surface of the washer and the portion of the liner between the channels with a sensor.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising stopping the cutting when the force sensed by the sensor exceeds a force level.

19. - 21. (Canceled)

22. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein each cutting blade is a circular blade having a cutting edge.

23. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein the cutting tool includes an arbor rotatable about a longitudinal axis and at least one cutting blade is fixedly mounted to the arbor and adapted to rotate with the arbor about the longitudinal axis.

24. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the at least one washer includes an inner washer that is fixedly mounted to the arbor, concentric with the cutting blade, and a depth limiting washer is mounted concentrically over the inner washer and is freely rotatable relative to the inner washer.

25. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the sensor is disposed between the inner washer and the arbor.

26. (New) The method of claim 17, further comprising providing a lubricant disposed between the depth limiting washer and the inner washer.